

ETHIL THE FROG

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ISSUE NUMBER 22

14 February, 1973

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British Diplomacy Club progresses?

For some time it has been clear that one man has been gathering power behind the innocent guise of the National Games Club. Together with a few partners, this man has organised regular games meetings in London every Sunday, and now this partnership, this syndicate of recreation, has taken the British Diplomacy Club over. Today, Ethil the Frog will publically name this man and expose his tyranny of play.

And now, if I can manage to ditch the pseudo-News of the World style, I'll say that Richard Sharp is the secretary of the postal section of the National Games Club, and I have just received the first Sharp-edited issue of this organisation's Bulletin - at least, that's what I think it is; it isn't particularly clear from looking at this thing...

The BDC, forming the greater part of the section at present, receives a fair amount of attention in this Bulletin, and there are quite a few constructive suggestions. There are more things of interest in the half-page of what could best be described as a 'historical background' than I can remember in a complete run of the Backstabber... but there, perhaps, I am biased...

A letter from Richard Sharp in the latest War Bulletin (which, in case you didn't know, is 5p per century from Hartley Patterson, 7 Cambridge Rd, Beaconsfield, Bucks, HP9 1HW) would seem to indicate that relations between the fanzines and the BDC are about to improve. I for one hope that this will mean an end to the misunderstandings and badmouthings which have existed between fandom and the BDC, and that the two groups can start to co-operate better than they have been doing. It will be interesting to see how the situation develops in the next few months; for, as Richard says, there is room enough in a booming hobby to accommodate both of us.

Richard's address is 27 Elm Close, Amersham, Bucks. If you're a paid subscriber to the NGC, membership of the postal section is free. For others the dues are the same as for the old BDC - 60p/year plus 50p for joining.

.....
The Black Spot

Requests for the continuation of this feature, which caused such a fuss some three issues ago, have been coming in. I have therefore decided to make a second award. Several candidates were forthcoming; John Lottice (for stabbing Andy and myself simultaneously in the same game) was clearly ahead till recently, followed by Bob Harris who pulled the wool over my eyes again in the DK Diadochi game, and Richard Sharp who stabbed me in BDC4. However, at the last minute a new entrant arrived, and he wins the Black Spot award yet again. Yes folks it's L*E*S P*I*M*L*E*Y who's won, for beating me into DK 73/4 by one day!!! And now let's hear a round of applause....

(Never mind, Les, all is forgiven for game BDC7. I hope we can now meet with some success in this game...)

.....
What have I forgotten?

Harry Boll has things for sale; to wit, a game of CAMPAIGN in mint condition for £1.00 plus postage, and back issues of WB and Ethil (sacrilege!) for the price of postage.

Don't forget the deadline - 2/3/73. Happy easter ..

A number of people have commented on my handling of the Davidson affair recounted last issue. Gratifyingly, most supported the action I took, though a few thought I should have taken Don Turnbull's advice and cast him out from all his games. Unfortunately, there have also been one or two dissenting voices, like this one:

ANDY DAVIDSON Might I be permitted to say a few words in my defence before a mob of enraged Ethil readers descend on Cambridge and string me up from the nearest lamp-post that isn't already festooned with bicycles. I, am, of course, referring to the great Spy Scandal as reported in Ethil 21.

Everyone seems to assume automatically that I was breaking the rules, i.e. cheating (horrified gasps). So, let's take a look at the rules of Diplomacy. What do we find but that 'in the Diplomacy period nothing is sacred'. In all the face-to-face groups I've played in this means that looking at other peoples' orders, if you get the chance, is perfectly permissible. Ah-ha, you all cry, but this is postal play. I can hardly disagree ((!!!)) so we now look at the rules covering postal play then applicable. These are the Ethil House Rules as published in Ethil 1. The first sentence states, "The normal rules of Diplomacy (1971) will be in operation unless otherwise specified". That seems pretty clear to me, so where's the bit saying that reading peoples' orders is illegal once the GM has read them? Try as you might, I don't think you'll find it. "Deception of the gamesmaster is not tolerated under any circumstances", maybe? I'm afraid that won't do; not only have I not lied to John about this, but I'd repeatedly warned him that it was quite possible for me to conduct such espionage, and suggested that he improve his extremely lax security.

Thus, what John is doing, is making up a new house rule to cover the situation and then applying it retroactively. I can't stop him from doing that (as John said to me, "I'm the GM and I can do what I bloody well like"), but don't expect me to like it. After all, I have to work on the basis of the rules as they stand, rather than any that might be invented in the future. If I find a loophole in the rules, I don't see why I shouldn't take advantage of it (Kolin and Graham, take note!).

That's my main argument completed, so now for a few incidental items. About Don's comments to John: what does money have to do with it? People often pay money to play in a face-to-face game, in the NGC and CUBWC for a start, so surely there's a contradiction somewhere?

There's the idea that John's punishment is more lenient than having kicked me out. That's not so - I don't mind being kicked out, I've got plenty of other games to keep me happy. However, it prolongs the agony having to miss a season (and also the builds) and then struggle on with the crippled remains of a once great country - though I admit it hasn't had much effect on my position in 1972ABde.

As for the 'unfair' argument, it's not as if I'm the only person in the country who can do this. Lots of players live close to GMs, and those who don't will have advantages that the others don't have. Anyway, if Diplomacy were made completely 'fair', every game would end in a seven-way draw.....

((The whole point is, that it isn't fair to all the players equally. If you're playing in a face-to-face game, and someone reads your orders, won't you take steps to rewrite your orders so that he can't benefit by his espionage? Damn right you will!

((Okay, so this is a postal game. I submit that when a player's orders have been lodged with the GM, it is now, for that player, 'after the period for the writing down of orders', even though he and other players may still submit further sets of orders up until the deadline is passed. That player therefore has a right to expect that his orders will not be read by anyone else until the adjudications are made, and you must be as aware of this as anyone else.

((Okay, my security system was lax. This doesn't automatically allow you to go snooping around in my room, does it? The fact that you told me I ought to tighten up my security is no excuse for your behaviour.

((What advantages have those who live far away from GM's? None as far as I can see. And while it's true that you're not the only person who can carry out such antics, that's going to be small comfort to poor old Evan Evans from Penmaenmawr, who plays postally because his face goes red

whenever he plans a stab, when he finds his orders have been read and he doesn't even know!

((You've brought up a fair amount of verbiage in trying to justify yourself in terms of the rules of Diplomacy and my house rules. As you pointed out, no rule covered this situation, and so I had to make one up. Many times in the past the rulebook and house-rules of various magazines have been found inadequate; my present rules are a conglomeration of years of experience in postal play. It is perhaps unfortunate that I applied my new rule retroactively, but I felt, as I still do, that I had no real choice in the matter. If you feel so bad about this, then I suggest you stop bleating about how cruel it is to stick around watching your country disintegrate, and resign like a gentleman and get out while you're still ahead.

((Ultimately, you know, my final answer is one you have already trotted out - I'm the GM and I can do what I bloody well like...))

Then there's your hypocrisy in refusing to accept my orders for 'B' game, and then complaining about the lack of orders for that game. And what about the past moans about people who miss moves spoiling the game for others - another contradiction, I think. There are further aspects of your hypocrisy that I won't go into, 'cos you wouldn't print them, but I'll leave them for people to guess about.

((I presume you are referring to the situation in BritDipCon I, when I (and several others) were able to read sets of orders for WB games. In particular, I saw Michel Feron's orders for 1971BU; however, my orders had already been submitted at that stage and I took no action as a result of my espionage. I suppose you have further examples of my 'hypocrisy' - your letter suggests as much - but you don't seem very willing to put your arguments forward, whatever they may be.))

Finally, should you have any further doubts, Gentlemen of the Jury, God himself has given his verdict. As a trial by combat (('')), John and I played two games of Situation 4 - needless to say, I won!

((Yes, and you keep beating me at bar billiards, you bastard; and that's a game I'm supposed to be good at! Never mind, I'm sure Geoff Corker will give you the come-uppance you deserve when he arrives here next October. I hope you don't expect to do any work here, Geoff...))

RICHARD WALKERDINE ...As for Andy Davidson, I expect you'd prefer to leave that episode as quickly as possible. Complete expulsion from all games would probably have been a bit harsh for a first offence, especially as it was a first offence not only for Andy but also for any of your readers. Your action and public announcement of the affair will probably guarantee Andy's good behaviour, and if you couple this with a warning that anything similar will be dealt with more harshly in future I think you will probably have done as much as anyone could in the circumstances. And that will be my last word on the subject; some things benefit by continued discussion, but with others it's better to get them over and done with as soon as possible, and then leave them well alone.

((And that just about sums up my sentiments...))

MICK BULLOCK I can't agree with Jeff Oliver's parting shots in his letter in Ethel 21. It's ridiculous to say that just because he doesn't want to collect previous game records, categorise, etc. (cupboard mind), that no-one else should be interested in so doing. Does he burn books after one reading, melt down records after one listening, destroy sporting records because they have only historical relevance, advocate the demolition of museums -- the blind goggles. And stamp and coin collectors must be the most abhorrent things imaginable to him -- you can't even use (play) them over again. How vaguely interesting, but not very!

Howell Davies is, I feel, being a little swayed by recent Courier slowness. The facts (not vague impressions) are as follows, if Don hasn't beaten me to it. Ethel, according to you, has been coming out exactly one year, i.e. 20 issues in the first year, number 21 being the first of the second year - right? ((Right.))

Now, my first copy of Courier is dated 23 Feb, 1972 - number 52, and the deadline for the next recent issue, number 53, is Feb. 19, 1973. Allowing for the four issues which contained only international games, that's 17 issues per year (one every 21 days 10 hours on average). Ethel's 20 per

((cont'd p.10))

1972CI ('E'): Spring 1907

ANGLO-FRENCH ENTENTE PROSPERS AS TURKISH
BASES FALL TO ITALY AND AUSTRIA

ENGLAND (Maule). a kre s (french) a ruh-mun; f hel s a kie;
f swe-gob, a den-lvn c by f bal & s by a stp; a fin s a stp;
f bar-nrg, f nth stands.

RUSSIA (Elsmore): a mun ms a ber, f pru s a ber, a mos-ukr;
f sev-bla, a arm s (italian) f ems-smy.

TURKEY (Pijohn) f smy s (french) f lon-aeg*; f bla-rum; a con-ank.

AUSTRIA (R.Lawson). a tyr & a boh s (russian) a mun, a gre's a bul,
f aeg-con s by a bul, a pie-ven.

ITALY (I Lawson). a tus-rom s by a nap*, f ems-smy.

FRANCE (Walkerdine): a ruh-mun s by a bur, a mar-pie s by f gol;
f vms-tun; f lon-nap s by f tys.

*Retreats: Italy a nap-apu, Turkey f smy-syr.

Moscow (Govt): All right, no-one replies, eh? Think we're not here, do you - ignore us and we'll go away, is that it? Right! We'll soon deal with that!

Sob, sob, I give in! Take over again, Dave! please! I just can't stand it any more!

Cagliari. The battle for Italy was now well under way, and with the leader of the Time Lords planning each new move, victory for the French mercenaries seemed assured. But in other ages, on other worlds, the story was not the same; help was needed in the eternal fight against the Great Enemy. Leaving Kiryak, one of the Time Lords, behind to report the progress of the battle, the leader and the others prepared to depart.

"Remember, Kiryak, I want daily reports on progress sent to Imrryr," said the leader. "This battle hasn't yet reached the stage where we can be certain of the outcome, but we have more pressing needs elsewhere. In an emergency, I can be contacted on alternate worlds DK 72/2 or BOG 1, but unless it's desperate go through headquarters at Imrryr. I'll be too busy for any but the most urgent of messages."

Lord Kiryak nodded silently as his leader buckled his great broadsword to his side, then, with a swirl of his cloak, he was gone, leaving Kiryak alone. Involuntarily, Kiryak shuddered, remembering the sight of burning crimson eyes in a fine-featured, youthful face. Eyes which stared into eternity.

"Take care, my lord," he murmured.

1972CL ('F') Autumn 1906

AUSTRIANS SWEEP INTO RUSSIA BY WAVES OF
ITALIANS DEADLOCK IN NORTH CONTINUES!

ENGLAND (Feintuck). f nrg-ed1, f nwy-swe; f nth-lon, f hol-kie.

GERMANY (Morrison): a mun-ber s by a kie & f bal*; a sil s a war,
a den-swe.

RUSSIA (Williams). a mos-war s by a ukr; a smy-arm; a con-bul;
f ber-bal s by f pru.

AUSTRIA (Davies): a rum-sev; a bul stands*.

ITALY (Oliver) f lon-gre, f adr-lon; a gal-rum s by a bud;
a ser-bul s by f aeg, a tri-ser s by a alb.

FRANCE (Alexander). a bel-hol; a pic-bel s by a bur; f bre-eng;
f spa(s)-mao; f cly-ed1, f wal-lon.

*Retreats: German f bal disbanded, Austrian a bul annihilated.

E. 4 bases: lon, ed1, nwy, hol. No change.

G. 6 bases: ber, mun, kie, den, swe, war. Owed one, but no build requested.

R. 5 bases: stp, mos, con, ank, smy. GM removes f bal.

A. 1 base: sev. No change.

I. 11 bases: ven, rom, nap, tun, tri, vie, bud, rum, ser, bul, gre.
Builds a ven, a rom & f nap!

F. 7 bases: bre, par, mar, bel, spa, por, lpl. No change.

Note that England is now ruled by Kevin Feintuck, 16 Argyle Rd, Lpl L4 2RS.
De press releases is on de next page....

Bulgaria: "What Slav resistance movement?"

London: Denis Moore gave a quick twist of his wrists and Hobnob's lupin snapped off at the root.

"Oh, Mr Moore," whimpered a soft voice, "Look what you've done! Hobnob's lupin will never be the same again, and he was so looking forward to showing it off at the ~~off~~ gardening competition."

"Shut up," sniggered Denis. "You want me to puke my guts up?"

"Nobody talks to my darling little nephew like that," stormed King Tom.

"I do," said Denis, sweetly, as he shot the King's lupin off.

The King rolled on the ground in agony. "You bastard! You bastard!" he croaked. "I know you'd give me that part. I always get the part where they shoot me in the lupin," and he rolled around again.

A voice came: "What's all this, then?"

Prince Wotapoofter wailed, "The King, my darling uncle, is dead! Oh, I don't know what to do!"

"Never mind," muttered the stranger, his face a mask of contempt. "I will take over the running of this country for a while. Your darling uncle seems to have made a right lupin-up of it, if I may say so."

"Ooh, you're so strong and merciless," gasped the Prince. And so the heralds went all round the land shouting, "The King is dead, long live the King (the other king, that is - not that one. Not the one that had a nephew called Wotapoofter, or some such ridiculous name. He's dead. They say he was shot in the lupin...)"

Rumania: Yah, boo, sucks, to the Eyeties. Did we steal his ice-cream vans, then? Aaaah!"

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1972ABdc ('G'). 2 Narquellie 3018

DWARVES WIPE OUT, SAILORS OF UMBAR
SET BACK AS SAURON'S ADVANCE GOES ON

ERIADOR (Morrison): a rhd ms a gm*; a ott s a rhd; a gwy s a hol,
=a sdo-fnt, a fld-tow; f sou-hld, a hol stands.

MORDOR (Davidson): =3a 1gd-dun s by a w1z & a mor; 2a wem-1gd;
a wol-fan, a cel-gf; 2a and-gm; a dg-and, a mm-rhd; a smi-mir,
a car-ere s by a run; 2a rbn-iro; a msh-kha s by a nur,
a mmo-sit, a bar-mmo; a nit-mti, a udu-nit, a rau-me;
a eas-lam s by a edo, 2a eem-eas.

RHOVANION (Walkerdine): =a ere fights to the end!*

UMBAR (Jeffery): a 1sn-lam; f sou stands; a hrd-sgo, a hdw-sgo,
=a bel-anf; f bel stands.

*Retreats: Rhovanion a ere wiped out. Eriador a gm-gun.

E: 8 bases shi, eve, lhu, arn, ang, bra, rhd, hol. No change.

M: 27 bases: bar, msh, mmo, udu, nit, sit, mti, car, lam, mor, lor, gf,
and, wem, eas, car, cel, smi, run, edo, 1gd, rau, wol, kha, dg,
ere, gm. Builds a car, a msh, a dg & a udu.

RH: Eliminated.

U: 5 bases: sgo, 1sn, hrd, cit, hum. Removes a 1sn.

Last issue I asked the players to vote on the issue of whether the game should be stopped and given to Mordor. The vote was as follows: two in favour of stopping the game, one abstention, and one 'the game shall continue till the whole of Middle-Earth is under the gaze of the Lidless Eye'. So, on we go...

Erebor: The darkness had descended, the end was very near. Hopelessly outnumbered, the Dwarves fought bravely, but soon only Gimli and a few dozen of his company were left. A handful of heroes making one last stand against the Dark Lord's might.

The Orcs were everywhere and one by one the heroes fell, overwhelmed by sheer weight of numbers. Eventually, only Gimli was left. He made his last stand on an out-cropping of rock, surrounded by the bodies of his fallen comrades. "That bloody fool Walkerdine never could manage an army," he muttered, as the Orcs closed in. "And I still say it didn't happen this way in the book."

Meanwhile, back in Barad-Dur: "Hee, hee, hee! Ho, ho, ho! Ha, ha ... hey, why am I laughing like this? What am I going to do when all Middle-Earth is conquered? I'll be bored to death.."

1972ACde ('H'). 1 Nerquelic 3018

MORDOR CONTINUES TO GROW AS LOGORRHOEA
BREAKS OUT ONCE AGAIN!!

ERIADOR (Lettice): a rhd & =a lms s (rhovanion) a f-and; a ang-gun,
a ctt s (rhovanion) =a gun-gi; a gwy-dun; a dun-wlz; a frl-bm;
f sou curses incompetent dwarfs.

MORDOR (Ward): 2a eas-odo; =3a cal-eas; a nit-cal, 2a mmo-ait;
a msh-mmo; a bar-dag s by 2a udu & a ash, a cre-mir s by a run;
a car-erc; a smi-and s by 2a dg.

RHOVANION (Davidson): =a gun-nwa, a gf ms a cel.

ROHAN (Davis): NMR // =2a dag, a bro, a mc, a lgd, a lsn, a wem all
stand!

UMBAR (Harris): f lam-tol, a mti-lam, a sgo-mti s by =a sit,
a hrd-sgo, a kha, a hdw & f cit stand.

*Retreat: Rhovanion a cel-wol.

Cor! Wot a forgetful lot you are! Andy Davidson now takes over Rhovanion,
while Jeremy Elsmore is drafted as a standby to submit orders for Rohan...

Moria: "Put those - mm - trinkets down immediately," ordered the dragon.
"They must be tested for purity."

"Never argue with a live dragon," muttered the Balrog, emptying the
casket on the ground. The dragon took a deep breath and everyone dived for
cover. When they emerged the casket was burnt to a cinder and several
of the rings had melted.

"Look," said Beorn, "one of them seems to have some writing on it. And
it's not hot at all. I don't recognise the script, though."

"Give it to me!" shouted the dragon, devastating several acres of the
Moria front lawn.

Barad-Dur (Mauron Poetry Inc.): I'm sorry that this
Poem
Isn't good.
But you're quite wrong
If you think that
It should.

Hobbiton. Traffic problems have been increasing steadily for some months
now, and were recently greatly aggravated by the arrival of the entire city
of Thapsus, the population of which asked for political asylum, claiming to
be refugees from Der Krieg. The city, together with the lower end of
Bagshot Row and Lobelia Sockville-Baggins, was last seen heading for
4000 A.D.

Cair Andros: Reports that the orcs of Barad-Dur are getting homesick after
spending months on this island were described by Bogbrush, a spokesman for
the mighty army, as 'ridiculous. I wouldn't go back if you paid me'.

Barad-Dur (News flash): Reinforcements are being sent to Cair Andros.
When our reporter asked why they were equipped with shackles and whips,
Mauron, there to see his troops off, said 'No comment' and threw him from
the top of the Dark Tower.

Cair Andros (News Flash): Mutiny! Orcs are fleeing the island in hundreds
to escape from their new reinforcements. Funny things, orcs...

Barad-Dur (Mauron Poetry Inc.). Metre does not matter
And rhyming is absurd
If I don't use the letter
You'll all give me the bird.

Khand: Comfortably seated in the Khand Eljou Restaurant, Ar Phasixpence
summoned a waitress and asked what was on the menu.

"Well," she said, "we've got spam, spam and spam, spam, spam and spam,
or spam, spam, spam and spam.

"Haven't you anything but spam?" asked the general's companion.

"What? You'll have spam and like it! We've got to keep the Khand
meat factories in business!"

"But, don't you know this is Professor Tolkien, author of 'The Lord of
the Rings?'" said Ar Phasixpence.

"Well, in that case you may have some corned beef with your spam. Only
a small piece, mind."

((More on next page!))

1972ACde cont'd:

Iseugard: Saruman: What mean these false rumours? Do you seek
To deceive your wrongfully imprisoned lord?
Speak, villain! The Rohan foe
Do still besiege our tower of Orthanc
And yet you claimed them gone!

Grima: Sire, 'twas true, the pure and untouched truth;
The unwashed herdsmen were in flight
Seeking the borders of our realm. But then
They rallied and returned. See--
Our former prisoner it is that leads them.

Saruman: Escaped? Then all is lost; for as you know
He was the fount and wellspring of our power.
The silver words he scribed could turn
The hardest of hearts to our persuasion.

Markwood: The Dol Culdor to Erebor bus halted at the barrier and a tough-looking orc climbed in. "Passports, please! You are now entering the Democratic Republic of North Mordor. All passports please!"

"Curses," muttered the dwarf leader. "The battle front must have shifted - we should have got off earlier. Ahem -- here you are, my good ma-- er, fellow."

"What's this? Kingdom of Umbar? You don't look like Southrons to me." He eyed the dwarves suspiciously. "What business do you have in Mordor?"

"Er, we were journeying through your truly hospitable country to visit the homes of our ancestors."

"Very well," snarled the orc. "Mind you stay out of trouble - see? We have ways of dealing with troublemakers." He laughed evilly, and approached a black-cloaked stranger.

Barad-Dur (Maureen Poetry Inc.) A poet is a funny thing
He writes his thoughts for money.
Remember he can't always think
Of an ending that is funny.

Barad-Dur: Using its last reserves of energy, the Tardis burst through the barriers and materialised in the great hall of the Dark Tower. The lidless eye turned from its scanning of the wars in the north to survey this new threat.

"So, a Time Lord seeks to penetrate the mighty disguise of Sauron," thrust the Dark Power, probing for a chink in the Doctor's armour. One slip at this stage could be fatal, the Doctor realises. Putting aside his revulsion at the obscene aspect, he spoke:

"Why this war, why this slaughter? Do you seek to rule a dead universe? Cannot you see that you can achieve the ends you want peaceably?"

"No, it is impossible. I have been wronged by the creatures of this plane. I will avenge myself."

"Yet this happened thousands of years ago! Surely--"

"You forget, Doctor, that I was once a Time Lord like yourself. When I have conquered Middle-Earth, I shall go on to enslave other probabilities! And I have another, very special reason for wanting to destroy the sentient life of Middle-Earth. I have been wronged, Doctor! And even a Time Lord can feel emotion somewhat."

The Doctor relaxed his guard slightly. Sauron sensed it, tightening his hold! If the Doctor knew, he did not show it. "How can you feel wronged by creatures of such low mental powers?" he muttered.

The lidless Eye flashed. "Because--" and here the Power seemed to choke, as if it had felt some great anguish, "because those god-damned two-bit sons of nothing wouldn't let me enter their Tell-A-Fairy-Joke contest!"

Elven-King's Halls: Thranduil tore open the envelope. "Thank god for first-class mail," he muttered. Beckoning to Dain, he shouted excitedly: "We've got it! We've got it! Smug's found the One Ring! Even now he's flying back with it!"

Dain's brows knitted. "One hopes he will not choose to use it himself," he said. "An invisible dragon could create some small disturbance if it wished."

"I trust Smug implicitly," said Thranduil, grinning. "Remember we are still holding his father Smaug as a guarantee of his good behaviour."

Behind them, there came the crackling sound of burning wood. "I wouldn't be too sure of that," came a low voice.

1972ADde ('I'). 2 Yavannie 3018

HUGE BATTLE RAGES IN SOUTH GONDOR!
RIDERS OF ROHAN DECIMATED! HOBBITS
INFEST THE ORC-HOLES OF MORIA'!!

ERIADOR (Waldie): =a hol-mor; a wea-sdo, f nwa-wes, a shi-bra;
a bra-gwy; a gwy-dun s by a ene & a min.

GONDOR (McIllich): =2a sgo-hrd*; a lan-edo s by a isn; a mti stands.

MORDOR (Bell): 2a lor* ms a mor*; a udu-nit; 2a msn-sgo s by =3a sit;
2a cal-eas, 2a min-rau.

RHOVANION (Pijohn): a gun-gm, a iro-rhn; a run-wil, a mir-run;
a mm & a gf s (criador) a hol-mor; a eem-bro s by a sm1 & a cel;
=a dg s a cel.

ROHAN (Yare): a me-eas; a igd-wem; a rau-ecm, =2a wol-lor s by a wiz.

UMBAR (Morrison): a nur ms a kha, a hrd-sgo s by a hdw & f tol.

*retreats Mordor 2a lor-fan. Mordor a lor and Gondor =2a sgo both have
nowhere to go and are annihilated.

E. 9 bases. shi, evc, lhu, brs, riv, arn, ang, hol, mor. Build a shi.

G 5 bases: mti, lam, cal, isn, edo. Build a cal & a lam.

M 9 bases: bar, msh, mmo, udu, sit, nit, sgo, rau, cas.

Build a udu, a bar, a mmo.

RH. 11 bases: and, sm1, gmo, ere, run, gf, rhd, dg, ccl, wol, car.

Owed one, but no build requested.

RO. 3 bases: wem, igd, lor. Removes a me & a ecm.

U: 4 bases: hrd, ndw, kha, cit. Removes a nur

Note that John Morrison, 14 Leys Rd, Blackpool, Lancs, is now playing Umbar.

Umbar. A log, or rather something that looked like a log, floated down the
Anduin towards Umbar. Tom Durrheim, engineer of the military coup in the
city of the Corsairs last Marie, rubber his eyes and stared long and hard at
what seemed to be no more than a rotting stump of dead wood. But he was
sure he had seen two pin-pricks of light glaring at him from the branches
of the log... almost like eyes. . No! It couldn't be - Gollum was still
recovering in the hospital after he had been ~~shot by a falling leaf~~ ~~in Mirkwood~~ ~~injured by a falling leaf~~ in Mirkwood. "Yess, preciouss, it iss
uss We don't like nasty clean hospitalsses We escaped, yess, and
we're going to stop you writing awful propaganda in our name, yess. Yess,
preciouss "

Tom caught sight of two hands snaking towards him He choked, and
darkness closed. ..

Minas Tirith (Govnt): The palantir of Minas Anor, which used to be incess-
antly trained upon the Towers of the Teeth, now looks more and more towards
the strange and sinister power in Mirkwood. Informed Denethor-watchers
believe that the Steward, seeing that the gallant and heroic defence of his
troops against impossible odds had all been in vain, may be devising some
new and strange stratagem. It is perhaps worth noting that an itinerant
wizard, one Gandalf Stormcrow, has ordered the construction of a 'Doomsday
Machine' under Minas Tirith.

1972Kco ('B'): July 1916

FRENCH LIBERATE BREST' ENGLISH LIBERATE
HOLLAND' AUSTRIANS LIBERATE BUDAPEST' TURKEY
LIBERATES NOTHING'

ENGLAND (Stuart): f mao-sou, f hel s a kie, f nwy stands;
f'bal-ber, a ang-bel; a bcl-hol s by f ang, a pru-dre,
a ruh-mun* s by a kie; a bro boards' f eng.

TURKEY (Maule): f cms*, f tun, f egypt, f gre, a mac, a ser, a bul &
a con all stand.

AUSTRIA (Walkerdine). a ark-stp; a mos-war; a ode-rum; a zar-pec,
a vic-bud s by a gal.

FRANCE (Davidson). a pic-bre s by a par & a gas, f sao-mao;
a por stands; a hol-ruh s by a lor, a ber-kie s by a mun,
a tyr-swa; a bud-cro s by a pec; f tys-cms s by f ion.

*Retreats. English a ruh, Turkish f cms both disbanded.

1972K ('A'): Spring 1911 AUSTRIANS IN MUNICH WHILE GERMANY MAKES SURE OF GETTING HIS OWN BACK ON FRANCE...

GERMANY (Davidson): f nth-eng; f nro-mao; f nrg-nwy; a swe-den; a bur-pic; a kie-hol, a den-kie; a mun-bur, s by a par & a ruh.

RUSSIA (Jeffery): a nwy-swe s by f bal & a fin; f stp(n)-nwy, a pru s a ber; a ber & a sil s (austrian) a tyr-mun, a gal-war, a mos-lvn, a ukr stands; f con-aog.

AUSTRIA (Robertson): a tyr-mun s by a boh; a vie-tyr; f mao-eng; f was-mao, f ion-tys; a ven-pie; a tri-ven; a bud stands.

FRANCE (Oliver): a mar-bur s by a gas, f bre s (austrian) f mao-eng.

Tunis (Peasants' Herald & Information Letter) (in exile) (special edition): Discussions are now taking place with a view to releasing hordes of gibbons upon the unsuspecting occupants of 'A' game and 'D' game. It is hoped to enlist the support of the English ambassador here, as well as that of the Time Lords, in this endeavour. We should point out that these are not the infinite number of monkeys used to produce this document.

1972BK ('C'): Spring 1909 FRENCH, TURKS MOVE CLOSER WHILE ENGLAND MAKES NO PROGRESS AT ALL

ENGLAND (Taylor): nmr // f moo, f nth, f ska, a edi, a swe, a fin, a stp, a mos, a hol, a bel, a kie, & a war stand.

GERMANY (Maule): nmr // a ber stands.

RUSSIA (Oliver): a sev-mos.

TURKEY (Jeffery): a boh-vie; a gal-war s by a ukr, f aeg s f ion, a gre-apu c by f ion; a tri & f adr s (austrian) a ven.

AUSTRIA (Waldie): a ven s (turkish) a gre-apu.

FRANCE (Bell): a sil s (english) a war, a mun s a sil; a par-bur, a pie-ven s by a rom & a tyr; f mar-gol; f tun & f nap stand.

Would Phil Jones like to send standby orders for England, please? Thanks.

1972BV ('D'): Spring 1908 TURKEY DRIVEN BACK ON LAND, BUT LOOKING STRONG BY SEA

ENGLAND (I. Lawson): a swe s (turkish) a nwy; f den-bal; f yor-edi, f nao-mao.

GERMANY (Jones): a pru-sul s by a war; a wal-lpl, a bel-hol; a run-kie; f nth ms f ska.

TURKEY (Oliver): a mos-stp; a nwy-swe; a con-sev c by f bla; f smy-aeg s by f oms, a ser-bud- s by a rum & a gal; f gre stands s by a bul.

AUSTRIA (Davidson): a bud-ser s by a tri & a alb; a vie-gal, a rom stands; a mar-pie, f spe(s)-mao; f ion-gre, f tys-ion

FRANCE (Bell): f lon ms f eng.

*Retreat: Turkish a ser has nowhere to go and is eliminated.

Standby players

This time I didn't do the adjudications till two days after the deadline, since I was giving a seminar on amino-acid sequencing in proteins on Tuesday night. Thus, all the moves which got posted late, or delayed in the post, have (for once) been included, and we're left with moves missed by the really forgetful ones...

- 'A': Andrew Waldie, Gregory Ward
- 'B': Geoff Corker, Jeremy Elsmore
- 'C': Phil Jones, Jeremy Elsmore
- 'D': Henry Pijohn, Martin Davis
- 'E': Harry Bell, Kevin Feantuck
- 'F': Andrew Waldie, Kevin Feantuck

Standby orders wanted from underlined people, please!

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NEXT DEADLINE: Friday 2 March, 1972. Don't be late!

Letters cont'd

year equals once every 18 days 5 hours - and that's a pretty insignificant difference. Amazing how the imagination can play funny tricks.

((I think the reason why Courier seems much slower than other zines (excluding War Bulletin with its six-month deadlines) is that Don Turnbull takes the winter builds season separately. I used to find this highly frustrating, since for three weeks virtually nothing happens in the diplomacy, especially if you happen not to be building or removing units that particular year. Now that I'm playing in rather more games than I was a year ago, I find this much less irksome - it's really a bit of light relief now, a time to ease off from the diplomacy and have a rest!

((An interesting point is that Richard Sharp's Dolchstoss, which used to have triweekly deadlines for Spring, Autumn and winter orders, has recently changed its policy to include four-week deadlines for the two movement seasons, with the build and retreat deadlines one week after the movement deadlines, with players being notified by postcard or some such of the outcome of these. This means that although the rate of magazine production is slowed - it is now once every 4 instead of 3 weeks - the speed of play is increased to 3 weeks per game year from nine.

((In the U.S. it is the exception rather than the rule for winter builds to be taken with Autumn moves, and, as Ethil's more veteran readers will know, many consider this to be the only proper and decent method, though, as is pointed out in the latest Dolchstoss, Diplomacy before the build orders are read out is strictly against the rules.))

Damn -- I've several more letters, but there's no more room. Next time, perhaps...

ETHIL THE FROG 22
c/o John Piggott
Jesus College
Cambridge, CB5 8BL
U.K.

"...smile remarks..." DON TURNBULL
"...curse you..." HARTLEY PATTERSON